

CLAIMS

We claim:

1. A picture archiving and communication system for managing medical images in a hospital, comprising:
 - (a) a plurality of image diagnostic systems, each providing an authorized user with medical image data generated by a modality based on signals derived from a patient,
 - (b) a central archiving system, for long-term storing said medical image data,
 - (c) a coordinator, for coordinating data transfer among said image diagnostic systems and said central archiving system.
 - (d) first network, providing the means for transferring said medical image data of said patient to the image diagnostic systems for said modality,
 - (e) second network, providing the means for transferring said medical image data to said central archiving system from said first network, to said image diagnostic systems from said central archiving system, and
 - (f) means for said image diagnostic systems for said modality automatically receiving said medical image data once generated by said modality, and said central archiving system automatically receiving said medical image data when traffic in said second network is low.

Whereby said second network traffic can be reduced during network peak hours.

2. The picture archiving and communication system of Claim 1 wherein said second network is an already existing network for said hospital.

whereby the need for building said second network for said picture archiving and communication system is eliminated.

3. The picture archiving and communication system of Claim 1 wherein said first network is a wired network, a wireless network, or a mixture of the two.

Whereby difficulties of physically installing networking cable for said first network could be alleviated.